



TARGET } Taking a Reflexive approach to Gender Equality for Institutional Transformation



Angela Wroblewski
Institute for Advanced Studies, Coordinator of TARGET

TARGET approach

TARGET aims to contribute to the advancement of gender equality in research and innovation (R&I) by supporting a **reflexive gender equality policy** in seven Gender Equality Innovating Institutions (GEIs). The TARGET approach goes beyond the formal adoption of a gender equality policy. It does this by emphasising an **iterative and reflexive process** towards equality at the institutional level, as well as establishing a **community of practice (CoP)** for gender equality within the institution. Effective change is the result of increased institutional willingness and capacity to identify, reflect on and address gender bias in a sustained way. The starting point and anchor of the process is a tailored Gender Equality Plan or Strategy (GEP/GES) in each GEI which will be designed, implemented, monitored, self-assessed and evaluated in the course of TARGET.

Within TARGET gender equality in R&I is defined as a **three-dimensional construct** which encompasses the three substantive areas defined by the European Research Area:

- 1) removing gender-related institutional barriers to careers
- 2) addressing gender imbalances in decision-making processes
- 3) strengthening the gender dimension in research programmes.

The TARGET approach to these areas is shown in the table below: three dimensions or areas of intervention are defined, according to related visions.

TARGET approach to gender equality policy in R&I

Area of Intervention	Vision
1 Removing gender-related institutional barriers to careers	There are no gender-related institutional barriers for careers; implicit gender bias and structural obstacles are abolished
2 Addressing gender bias in decision-making	Decision-making is gender-fair; women and men are equally represented in decision-making bodies; decision-making bodies are gender aware and gender competent
3 Including the gender dimension in education and research	Education and research include the gender dimension: gender is mainstreamed in higher education curricula, which also includes gender-specific subjects; research considers the gender dimension in content in all stages of the research process

TARGET GEP Cycle

The TARGET approach is based on a cyclical and evidence based model of policy development. The process starts with an empirical assessment of the status quo of gender equality within each GEI (the Gender Equality Audit). The Gender Equality Audit analyses the procedures and practices within each GEI using qualitative and quantitative data on the three substantive areas of gender equality. This requires a reflection of existing data within each institution if the data allows for a gender analysis. In case existing data is not sufficient, data collection modes have to be adapted or new data has to be collected.

Based on this analysis GEIs develop a customised Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in order to initiate institutional change. Each GEI develops a monitoring focus on the implementation of the activities mentioned in the GEP as well as the development of the status quo of gender equality within the institution.

TARGET provides, for each step of the development and implementation, capacity building activities and specific tools (e.g. the Gender Equality Audit Tool, Guidelines for the development of GEPs, Guidelines for monitoring and self-assessment – available on www.gendertarget.eu). Each of the TARGET tools is adapted to the specific circumstances of each GEI. Supporting partners provide targeted support for this transfer process. Each of the steps also offers the possibility for a reflection of the process, the results achieved so far, as well as a possibility to adapt the GEP or make it more specific.

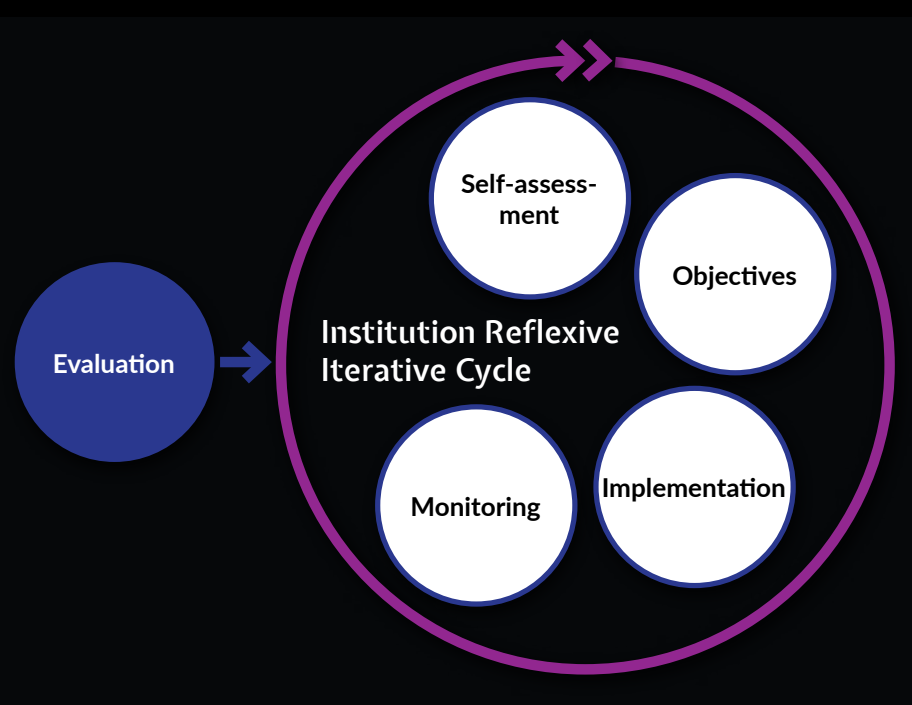


AdobeStock © ake1150

Community of Practice (CoP)

TARGET is based on the assumption that a CoP is a key element of a reflexive gender equality policy as it provides room for self-referencing of current developments regarding gender equality and supports mainstreaming gender within the organisation. It also enables distributed responsibility avoiding a situation where the responsibility for gender equality is exclusively assigned to an expert or a gender equality office. The CoP should be a group of change agents from different fields of the organisation willing to pursue gender equality goals. Consequently, TARGET aims to support the establishment of a CoP and discusses its relevance in the tools provided. For instance, within the Gender Equality Audit Tool GELs identify relevant stakeholders and strategies to involve them actively in institutional gender equality policies.

First experiences with TARGET implementation support the assumption that the CoP is an important element of a reflexive gender equality policy. It also becomes clear that the CoP has to be targeted to the specific institutional circumstances. Hence, the CoPs differ regarding their links to decision-making bodies, the involvement of external stakeholders, the frequency and form of involvement as well as the role assigned to members of the CoP. Promising strategies assign different roles and tasks to specific members of the CoP and develop targeted communication strategies for different groups of members. It seems to be easier to actively engage stakeholders when gender equality is linked to other current institutional strategies.



Experiences with the establishment of a CoP show the importance of a moderator who should bring along specific characteristics (e.g. gender equality expertise, knowledge about the institution, acceptance within the institution, social skills, strategic thinking). However, the role of the moderator is especially important in the context of a reflexive gender equality culture as s/he has to create a room for reflexivity, use empirical evidence and build alliances with other strategic goals and institutional projects. Hence we assume that the CoP as such and the moderator, in particular, are key factors for a sustainable gender equality policy.

TARGET consortium

TARGET supports GELs to develop the capacity for a reflexive gender equality policy focusing on the three substantive areas (careers, decision-making and education and research content). GELs cover R&I in its broadest sense, including all disciplines encompassing both basic and applied research.

TARGET consortium is made up of eleven institutions. Alongside the six GELs implementing Gender Equality Plans (GEPs), the network of universities has adopted a Gender Equality Strategy (GES) at the network level and aims to foster institutional change in its member universities. In addition,

three RPOs play other roles in the project, namely coordinator, supporting partner providing tailored assistance to each GEII and, finally, external evaluator of GEP/GES implementation.

TARGET consortium: participants by type of institution and TARGET role

Partner	Type of Institution	Target Role
1 IHS, Austria	RPO, private non-profit	Coordinator of the project and external evaluator of GEP/GES implementation
2 National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS), Romania	RPO, public	GEII, GEP implementation
3 Research Innovation Foundation (RIF), Cyprus	RPO, private non-profit	GEII, GEP implementation
4 Fondazione Regionale per la Ricerca Biomedica (FRRB), Italy	RPO, public	GEII, GEP implementation
5 Hellenic Foundation of European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Greece	RPO, public	GEII, GEP implementation
6 Université Hassan II Casablanca (UH2C), Morocco	RPO, University, public	GEII, GEP implementation
7 University Belgrade (UB), Serbia	RPO, University, public	GEII, GEP implementation
8 Réseau Méditerranéen des Ecoles d'Ingénieurs et de Management (RMEI)	Network of universities	GEII, GEP implementation
9 NOTUS, Spain	RPO, private non-profit	Supporting partner, providing tailored-made assistance to UH2C, UB, RMEI
10 Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini (FGB), Italy	RPO, private non-profit	Supporting partner, providing tailored-made assistance to ARACIS, RPF, FRRB, ELIAMEP



AdobeStock © Boggy

The TARGET countries have been characterised as relatively 'inactive' in developing gender equality policies in R&I. The widening gap between 'proactive' countries and 'inactive' countries is a worrying development – as some countries are being 'left behind' – which if nothing is done may have negative implications on the quality and excellence of R&I throughout Europe. Consequently, TARGET partners organise national events to initiate a national discourse on gender equality in R&I. Visit the TARGET homepage to learn more about these activities: www.gendertarget.eu

SUMMARY

TARGET aims to contribute to the advancement of gender equality in research and innovation (R&I) by supporting a reflexive gender equality policy in seven Gender Equality Innovating Institutions (GEIIs) in the Mediterranean basin - including three research performing organisations (RPOs), three research funding organisations (RFOs) and a network of universities.

PROJECT PARTNERS

IHS, Austria; National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS), Romania; Research Innovation Foundation (RIF), Cyprus; Fondazione Regionale per la Ricerca Biomedica (FRRB), Italy; Hellenic Foundation of European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Greece; Université Hassan II Casablanca (UH2C), Morocco; University Belgrade (UB), Serbia; Réseau Méditerranéen des Ecoles d'Ingénieurs et de Management (RMEI); NOTUS, Spain; Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini (FGB), Italy.

PROJECT LEAD PROFILE

Born 1969 in Vienna, studied Sociology at the University of Vienna (1990-1994), doctoral studies in Sociology at the University of Vienna (1994-1996). Postgraduate course in Sociology at the IHS (1996-1998). Postgraduate Diploma in Social Science Data Analysis (University of Essex, UK, 2004), Master Studies at the University of Essex in Social Science Data Analysis (2004-2006) Since 1998 member of the academic staff at the IHS. Lecturer at the University of Vienna.

CONTACT DETAILS

Angela Wroblewski (coordinator)
Institute for Advanced Studies
Josefstädterstr. 39
1080 Vienna
Austria

☎ ++43-1-59991135

✉ wroblews@ihs.ac.at

🌐 www.gendertarget.eu

🌐 www.ihs.ac.at



FUNDING

TARGET is a SwafS-03-2016-2017 Coordination and Support Action funded by the European Commission Program H2020 (grant no. 741672).